

APPENDIX D

Community Overviews

Polk County

Project Title:	Polk County <i>Party Barge</i>
Community Coordinator:	Kevin Austad, bar and limousine owner Keven Casselius, bar and limousine owner Kathy Cross, bar and limousine owner
Key Partner:	Polk County Tavern League
Total Number of Rides:	11,701

COMMUNITY ISSUE

Polk County was faced with no pre-existing cab service and a high incidence of bar hopping from one small town to the next. This translated into high numbers of impaired drivers covering long distances on county highways. There is one 25-mile stretch of rural highway that runs through several small towns and past approximately 35 bars. Coordinators state that the program now covers a 400 square mile service area.

BUSINESS OPERATION

Older limousines provide the basis for a fun, upscale, and funky way to make stops between the numerous small bars, as well as offer a safe and economical way to get home at the end of the evening. Limos, staffed by professional drivers and dispatched from a central point, allow groups of up to a dozen people to bar hop. It's not uncommon to have groups of four to eight riders signing up for an entire evening, including home pick-up and drop-off. Two to four limos are in operation on Friday and Saturday nights and serve approximately 35 Tavern League establishments. Riders pay \$15 for the entire night, including a ride to the bar and back home, or can purchase ride segments at \$4 per segment. Users tend to take the *Party Barge* in groups of two or more.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

In Polk County, program leadership came from a few tavern owners who, from the outset, were so committed to this idea that they would not take "no" for an answer. As in Dodge-Point, there was no cab company running in the county and no alternative to getting bar patrons safely home. Without a cab company in place, no easy way existed for the Polk County Tavern League to even apply for Safe Ride funding from the state league.

When they learned of the planning meeting for *Road Crew*, they pleaded with conference organizers to attend. Polk County, located in the northwestern sector of the state, is outside of the geographic zone within which project staff intended to run the pilot program. Not only did Polk County tavern owners prevail in attending the conference, they returned from it able to convince the sheriff and numerous small town boards and police departments that providing limos, dubbed *Party Barges*, would allow young bar patrons to safely bar hop and would be a means to greater highway safety.

By the time the Polk County Tavern League submitted their proposal, all of the political objections to the program had been swept away. The League kept in touch with the various municipalities in which their program runs, letting them know about the success of the program and staying ahead of any potential criticism of the initiative.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR SUCCESSES

Polk County originated the idea of using limousines to transport bar patrons. The beauty of this idea is that it appeals to the target on many levels. Polk County reports that they achieved the goals of the *Road Crew* project by listening to the target and offering a product the target said they would use. This concept was so successful that another community quickly adapted it.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR CHALLENGES

There is a hidden danger in the limousine-based model. It is a well-entrenched behavior in Polk County for young men to use their cars to cruise from bar to bar throughout the evening. The *Party Barge* has, without a doubt, lessened that activity and the possibilities for crashes. The danger is in the last ride of the evening. With many patrons to transport home, users, who earlier in the evening pledged to drivers they would use the *Party Barge* to get home, might act impulsively and drive themselves home instead. Limo drivers and local organizers are aware of this issue and continue to find ways to make sure everyone who rides the *Party Barge* has a ride home. This issue is being vigorously attacked and the change is observable.

PROMOTION AND INCENTIVES

- Limos attract visibility, cruising Polk County roads every weekend. This ride alternative is an event in itself.
- Limos have been in a number of summer parades and festivals, and featured in print publicity materials.
- Several newspaper articles have covered the *Party Barge*, as well as some radio programs. Two local papers did lengthy articles when a drunk driver was arrested after colliding with the *Party Barge*.
- Flyers outlining the details of the service have been distributed to local hotels, clinics, and other public places with brochure racks.
- *Party Barge* gift certificates for a full night of rides were promoted as holiday gifts
- *Party Barge* posters, offered in a variety of sizes, are in place in all participating bars.
- Bar owners sell tickets for riders and place calls to dispatch limos.
- The Tavern League has begun fundraising on the *Party Barge's* behalf.
- *Road Crew* t-shirts have been distributed as frequent rider incentives.

SUSTAINABILITY

A casino night was hosted by one of the participating bars in October 2002. This dual marketing and fundraising opportunity raised \$2,400 for the program. Local merchants donated items for a silent auction and flyers promoted the event to bar patron and limo users. Other fundraising efforts will continue to provide support for the program.

Community leaders estimate that limousine fares will cover all but \$10,000 of operating expense for the upcoming year. They have decided the easiest way to cover this shortfall is by assessing a fee to all of the participating bars on the *Party Barge* route. Fees may range from \$200 to \$500 per bar.

Dodgeville and Mineral Point

Project Title:	Dodge-Point <i>Road Crew</i>
Community Coordinator:	Joanne Munson, community coordinator Dennis Marklein, body shop owner that leases cars to program
Key Partner:	Iowa County Circuit Court Judge William Dyke Lands' End Several local insurance companies Iowa County Tavern League Volunteer drivers
Total number of rides:	3,082

COMMUNITY ISSUE

Dodgeville and Mineral Point are approximately eight miles apart from one another. There was a steady flow of traffic between these two larger communities and several smaller communities by members of the target group. There was no cab or public transportation system in place to provide alternative rides home for alcohol-impaired drivers.

BUSINESS OPERATION

The service operates Friday and Saturday nights and designated special events and holidays. Rides range from \$5 to \$10 per night, depending on distance from Dodgeville or Mineral Point. Riders receive unlimited service in the primary service area for \$5; an extended service area requires an additional \$2.50; passengers traveling outside the service area are charged an additional \$5.

There are five vehicles in the Dodge-Point *Road Crew* fleet: two 6-passenger limos and one 10-passenger limo accommodating large groups, a Cadillac Sedan, and a Lincoln Town Car Sedan. On most nights only two vehicles are in operation. Volunteer drivers were originally paid a nightly stipend, but now accept tips in lieu of such stipend. Male/female teams operate the vehicles and deliver patrons, and their vehicles if necessary, to their homes. Patrons or wait staff can call the dispatch number printed on publicity materials and vouchers are available for sale from bars. A local body shop owner provides the vehicles and leases them to the program on a mileage reimbursement basis.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Project staff's first contact with Dodgeville was through Iowa County Circuit Court Judge William Dyke. After reading about preliminary research conducted by WisDOT/BOTS and the University of Wisconsin School of Business, Dyke contacted researchers to explore the possibility of launching such an effort in Iowa County.

Judge Dyke explained that in his position on the bench, he witnesses firsthand the destructiveness of an OWI conviction. He sees how revoked licenses can lead to the loss of jobs and income as a result of lost access to transportation. He sees the aftermath of serious alcohol-related crashes, from the costs to victims and their families, to the costs incurred by the county. These expenses can include medical and legal bills, as well as costs to police departments and EMS responders.

He also sees that, at least in his jurisdiction, that there were no alternative means for those who had over-consumed to get home. For all of these reasons, he had the vision to see how championing a new system could benefit his community. When the opportunity to apply for a grant arose, Judge Dyke's office organized a group of 20 or so broad-based community leaders, including municipal employees, small business owners, EMS volunteers, and representatives of the county's major employer.

At such point as Judge Dyke had fulfilled his role as catalyst, he receded from the program and allowed the community to develop the plan. It was the owner of a body shop and an insurance agent, both of whom dealt daily with the impact of drinking and driving, who took the idea from that initial meeting and shaped it into a proposal.

The judge's position of authority and leadership was enough to prevent this very conservative community from running into a gauntlet of difficulties and objections from those who believe that driving intoxicated persons to and from bars enables over-consumption. In all communities, EMS volunteers, police, and public health workers encounter the negative consequences of drunk driving. Without someone like a judge or police chief to sweep aside objections and urge the community to try a new approach, the premise of social marketing programs such as the *Road Crew* project can be seen as enabling bad behavior.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR SUCCESS

The Dodge-Point *Road Crew* experienced enormous community acceptance, built a wide-ranging coalition, and has 80 volunteer drivers actively involved in the program. Dodge-Point demonstrated that it is possible for an entire community to support the idea of highway safety, even when the execution of the idea involves transporting bar patrons from town to town throughout the night. This strong coalition is the best harbinger in predicting a bright future for the Dodge-Point *Road Crew* and is a strong model for other communities to follow.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR CHALLENGE

Over-commitment of key players, including coordinators with demanding full-time jobs, was sometimes an obstacle to staying on track with project staff. While the commitment of key players to the goal of community safety was absolutely beyond reproach, the program was late in launching and struggled to keep up with record keeping because of the many demands on these volunteers. Happily, as the program starts its second year, a large core of volunteers is in place and scheduling duties have been shifted from the original community coordinator to a new person.

PROMOTION /INCENTIVES

- Customized *Road Crew* posters and calling cards were produced and distributed locally. A coordinator was given the task of making sure that several posters remained visible in each bar and throughout all towns.
- Drivers wear Lands' End *Road Crew* t-shirts, which were donated by the company, and all bartenders in the service area received "Get Your Hassle Free Ride" t-shirts emblazoned with an embroidered *Road Crew* logo.
- Limo access is advertised as an incentive. Advertisements tell users to call in advance to get picked up by the limo, which encourages the target to leave their cars at home and guarantees them access to the limo for their night out.
- Removable magnetic *Road Crew* signs are affixed to the side of vehicles when they are in service.
- Advertisements in the weekly newspaper promoted the program, and a TV ad runs locally on Charter Communications cable channels.
- A full-page article on *Road Crew* appeared in *The Dodgeville Chronicle*.
- A website is in place to promote the program. In the future, riders will be able to book rides online.
- Up to 80 volunteers drive for the program. Drivers receive free rides when desired as an incentive for their service and collect tips ranging from \$20 to over \$100 a night.

SUSTAINABILITY

Noting that their goal has always been to be able to operate this program “on a shoestring,” planners relied solely on grant money to operate the program during its first year. As a result, they were able to save approximately \$25,000 to begin the second year of operation. Dodge-Point has begun fundraising and earned \$2,500 during a recent golf fundraiser. Fundraising plans for the upcoming year include a pasty sale (a local delicacy comprised of a Cornish meat and potato pastry) and continuing to tap local businesses for in-kind services as well as direct donations. Contingency plans might include asking major employers, such as Lands’ End, for a sizable annual donation.

Plans are underway to work with Judge Dyke to secure some OWI funding for perpetuation of *Road Crew* efforts. With the combined goodwill of coordinators, community spirit, and volunteer labor, community leaders feel confident they will be able to sustain the program.

Tomah

Project Title:	Tomah “Take a Cab on Our Tab” Road Crew
Community Coordinator:	Renie Betthauser
Key Partners:	City of Tomah: Mayor’s Office and Police Department Safe Community Coalition Ace Cab Company
Communities Involved:	Tomah and immediate area
Total Number of Rides:	4,974

COMMUNITY ISSUE

In this community’s grant application, an increase in recent years of alcohol-related crashes and arrests were named as community issues.

BUSINESS OPERATION

The goal of this project was to induce the target group to use an already well-established, low-cost cab service. The program offered subsidized rides after 5 p.m., seven days a week, primarily within Tomah city limits. Logs show a consistent 80-100 riders per week.

Riders using the program were offered \$2 off their fare on rides home; those requesting rides to a bar received coupons for \$2 off the price of food or games at participating establishments. Either riders or wait staff could call the cab companies for rides.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Tomah showed promise early on in the grant process. A tavern owner, a police department representative, a cab company owner, and the then mayor, attended the initial planning conference. Shortly afterwards, the charismatic mayor stepped down from his position to run for governor. While the new mayor did not object to the program, he was not outspokenly in favor of it. Once the program received funding, a coordinator was quickly hired and the project seemed poised for success.

However, it soon became apparent that there was an underlying resistance to vigorous promotion of the program to the target. Logs, dutifully kept and promptly delivered to project staff, revealed that older bar patrons were primarily using the service and few in the target showed any interest. Project staff came to understand that there was a deep resistance to promoting the program as a fun and alternative service. After months of operating a lackluster program, both the police officer administering the program and the coordinator he hired stated that they strongly believed the *Road Crew* premise sent the wrong message about drinking.

While the community finished out the program, there was no interest in continuing the social marketing effort. Insofar as Tomah already had in place a 24-hour a day cab service, the prospects of continuing a Safe Ride program under the auspices of the county Tavern League or the Safe Community Coalition seem promising.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR SUCCESSES

The total number of rides increased later in the year, along with an overall awareness of the availability of cabs as an alternative way to getting home. Because the cab service was already in place, there was no need to launch a new service. Now that the demonstration project is over, a low-cost means to transport patrons to and from the bars remains in place with a higher level of use among all age groups in Tomah.

PROGRAM'S MAJOR CHALLENGES

A strong coalition never coalesced as a base of support in Tomah. At other grant sites, an advisory group comprised of the target was tapped to implement and promote a program they and their peers would utilize. Attempts to put together such a group in Tomah failed. The population in Tomah was older than the target, which made attracting younger riders more difficult. There was also a lack of engaged participation in the program by bar owners and the primary cab company. The two key players, the community coordinator and the police officer assigned to supervise the program, both rejected the core social marketing premise of the *Road Crew* project. Embracing and vigorously promoting this premise was perhaps more essential in Tomah than in any other participating community. With low-cost cabs as a preexisting mode of transportation, reducing the stigma associated with using them seemed the challenge for the community. It is not clear whether or not that aim was achieved.

PROMOTION/ INCENTIVES

- Bartenders and cab drivers promoted the program and initialed each voucher they distributed. The number of vouchers distributed by each bartender or driver was tallied at the end of each month and the bartender and driver with the most vouchers won a cash prize.
- Customized *Road Crew* posters were made and distributed to local bars.
- 200 beer cup holders with *Road Crew* logos were distributed to participating bars.
- A young man and young woman in the target age group helped promote the program in bars, handing out free ride vouchers and telling patrons about the program.
- Several newspaper articles were written about the program and weekly *Road Crew* ads ran in the local newspaper.
- 200 *Road Crew* t-shirts were made available and distributed.

SUSTAINABILITY

With an existing low-cost cab service already in place and a desire only to sustain the Safe Ride portion of the program, this initiative has the least complicated prospect for sustainability. If all that is required is continued ride subsidies, it is likely that the Safe Ride program could provide the foundation for paying for rides home. That program requires that communities match League funds. Under discussion is the possibility that Tomah's Safe Community Coalition provide matching funds, perhaps with monies from a small state grant to the organization. If that does not happen, Tomah could seek private donations to sustain the matching part of the program, either from bars participating in the program or from other businesses.

Manitowoc County

Project Title: Manitowoc County Road Crew

Key Partners: Tavern League
Sheriff's Department
Miller distributor
Three cab companies

Number of Rides Given: Unknown

NOTE: This program was in operation from late October 2002 until New Years Eve 2002.

BUSINESS OPERATION

In its last quarterly report filed, dated October 2002, Manitowoc County still struggled to define the type of on-going service they would offer. The plan at that time was to augment a Safe Ride program already in place, provide rides to and from bars, and expand the project's scope to provide rides in limos or buses, to and from a variety of special events. This included, but not limited to, offering roundtrip service to and from summer festivals and to and from sports bars for Packers coverage. The program also aimed to provide rides in outlying areas and had experimented with a shuttle service running between several taverns located in outlying rural areas.

The shuttle service launched in late November with an agreement to stick to the agreed upon pricing structure through the new year. As soon as publicity about the shuttle launch began to appear, political opponents of the coordinator and foes of the cab vendor began to come forward with a variety of objections to the program. Concerns from Manitowoc County citizens ranged from their fear that the program enabled drunkenness to concerns that the cost of the program was too high, that the cab vendor could not be trusted and stood to earn too much from the program, and that a conflict of interest existed because the coordinator served on the county board of supervisors.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Manitowoc County was not among the communities first selected to participate in this project. In fact, it was second runner-up behind two communities unable to accept their awards. Concerns about Manitowoc County turned out to be prescient. The original grant writing represented the work of two community health nurses who attended the pre-proposal writing conference in Madison and were eager to see such a program in place in Manitowoc County. Their enthusiasm was not shared within their health organization and they failed to find internal support for the program. Undaunted, they submitted a proposal, disclosing that they would not be able to provide leadership if the proposal were to be accepted. The Sheriff's Department agreed to sponsor the program, but only if it were understood that it would provide no administrative support. The Tavern League, with a successful Safe Ride program in place, agreed to hire and supervise a coordinator only after no one else stepped forward to offer these services.

All parties at the state and local levels shared concerns about the primary cab vendor. While strongly self-interested in the concept of the *Road Crew* project as a means to expand his business, he had a colorful local reputation and has had negative interactions with both local law enforcement and some of the bars that participated in the ACT 109 program. Trusting this vendor to run the program was a leap of faith too large for many of those who might have been stronger proponents.

Guided in the effort by a committed supper club owner, the Tavern League hired an aspiring young politician, serving an elected position on the county board, to manage the project. The thought was that he would objectively bridge the county interests with the private interests of the local cab company. Ironically, this seemingly good compromise was dashed when partisan political foes of the coordinator objected to him managing the contract for this county-held grant program on the grounds that it was a conflict of interest. With no politically neutral civic leader to champion the project, he was pressured into resigning.

When the last patron was delivered home after a long night of New Year's Eve celebration, the *Road Crew* program in Manitowoc County shut down. The Tavern League and the Department of Transportation Safe Ride program remains in place in Manitowoc and Two Rivers, and are designed to take intoxicated patrons home from bars.

PROMOTION/INCENTIVES

- November launch included a kick-off party, live radio remotes, and free t-shirts for the first 50 patrons.
- A visibility plan included pizza box flyers and print ads.
- Billboards promoted the cab vendor's service as well as the *Road Crew*.

SUSTAINABILITY

There were numerous factors that contributed to the demise of this effort, but the major problems were at the administrative level. There was both a lack of trust and respect between project leadership and the primary vendor, and a lack of political support at the county level to encourage this pilot project to proceed. Unlike Polk County and Dodge-Point, where leadership was united in the goal of seeing programs succeed, in Manitowoc County self-interested petty concerns became insurmountable obstacles.

LESSONS LEARNED

There is a clear lesson to be learned here. The major requirement for a successful program is having a strong, zealous champion in place to steer the program and meet the challenges of putting a complex business and marketing campaign in place. Such a champion never emerged in Manitowoc County.